

Abstract

Primary Area of Interest: Mental Health (Psychiatry)

Secondary Subject: Technology application

Title: Telepsychiatry Service as a Remedy

Author Acknowledgement: COL Swarnalatha Prasanna

Abstract Narrative:

The Department of Defense is facing a critical psychiatrist shortage at many Medical Treatment Facilities without a decline in need for psychiatric interventional services. Comprehensive telepsychiatry services were developed as a remedy. Service protocols have proven their reliability serving multiple clinical applications including consultative services with the recent Ft. Dix Soldier Readiness Program (SRP). The experiential data provides a powerful blueprint to answer concerns of personnel shortage, consumer dissatisfaction, lost workdays, administrative responsibilities of peer review, continuing education and command directed evaluations. This technology-based application increases access to healthcare and improves the quality of care delivered, as it is interactive, timesaving and distance eliminating.

WRAMC Psychiatry and WRAMC Telemedicine reviewed regional outpatient psychiatric usage data for North Atlantic Regional Medical Command concluding that inclusion of ARMY sponsored telepsychiatry service as a choice may be beneficial in terms of cost savings and will also make available early intervention service reducing the burdens and costs of crisis management. As the military healthcare system becomes more automated, integrating psychiatric services for direct access for primary care providers and patients supports point-of-care service for any duty station supporting force-readiness and force health protection.

Presenter Information:

Presenter's Biography

COL Prasanna, Chief, Telepsychiatry & Community Mental Health at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center has provided leadership in the development of telepsychiatry services for the North Atlantic Regional Medical Command. In 1978, she graduated from Bangalore Medical College in Bangalore, India. In 1984, she completed a General Psychiatry Residency at the University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey. As a Diplomate of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, she is a very active clinician and analytical problem-solver. Her grasp of telecommunication and information technologies powered her concept of bringing the "Mental Health Clinic to the patient".